



How to Roast a Lamb: New Greek Classic Cooking

Michael Psilakis, Barbara Kafka (Foreword)

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<!--StartFragment--> A rising star in the food world, Michael Psilakis is co-owner of a growing empire of modern Mediterranean restaurants, and one of the most exciting young chefs in America today. In *How to Roast a Lamb*, the self-taught chef offers recipes from his restaurants and his home in this, his much-anticipated first cookbook. Ten chapters provide colorful and heartfelt personal essays that lead into thematically related recipes. Gorgeous color photography accompanies many of the recipes throughout. Psilakis's cooking utilizes the fresh, naturally healthful ingredients of the Mediterranean augmented by techniques that define New American cuisine. Home cooks who have gravitated toward Italian cookbooks for the simple, user-friendly dishes, satisfying flavors, and comfortable, family-oriented meals, will welcome Psilakis's approach to Greek food, which is similarly healthful, affordable, and satisfying to share any night of the week.

How to Roast a Lamb: New Greek Classic Cooking Details

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From Reader Review How to Roast a Lamb: New Greek Classic Cooking for online ebook

Beka says

Not my style, but not a bad cookbook.

Ruth says

Usually, when reviewing a cookbook, the first thing I do is look for a recipe or two to make--after all, what good is a cookbook if the recipes aren't? I'm sure a lot of the recipes are wonderful, if you have time to make them, the ingredients available and a family that will eat them. I'm looking here at a recipe for smoked octopus with fennel puree, lemon confit & pickled vegetables. Preparing it is a two day job as you have to soak the vegetables in a pickling solution overnight. You have to pickle pearl onions and chanderelles, make lemon confit, smoke the octopus (actually, first you have to sear it, then roast it and then smoke it), prepare a fennel puree and then assemble the dish. Even if my kids would eat this, I don't have two days to cook dinner, and buying 27 ingredients, most of which are not in my regular repertoire, would cost a small fortune.

There are simpler recipes than the smoked octopus. The French Fry recipe, which the author says his mother made when she was in a rush, calls only for potatoes, oil, and kosher salt, sea salt, and cracked pepper. After cutting the potatoes into the proper size, Psilakis rinses them under very slow-running water for 20 minutes. After drying them, he pre-fries them in 250 degree oil until tender, but then holds them in the refrigerator for up to four hours before deep frying them again in 375 degree oil until brown, and then seasoning them.

The photographs are gorgeous and I enjoyed the personal stories that began each chapter. I'd consider this book to be what I've heard called "kitchen porn"--fun to look at but not for real use. Actually, I'm sure that someone who cooks as a hobby--as opposed to someone who has to get dinner on the table in a short period of time for three kids every night--could have a lot of fun with this book. A lot of the recipes look like something I'd love to order in my favorite Greek restaurant.

I'd like to thank the folks at Hatchette for sending me a complimentary copy of this book for review. I happen to like kitchen porn and maybe one day when the kids are gone, I'll have time for recipes like this.

Deborah Sloan says

The most beautiful cookbook and life story I have ever read. Fabulous photography and recipes that will make any chef jealous. I love this book!

Ashley says

(Curse), this book is delicious. Rustic, clear recipes for every traditional Greek favorite you've ever loved and more; matte photographs so colorful and full of detail that you know how satisfying each dish will be; delightful narratives and explanations take you straight to Mykonos, Napfliion, Olympia, etc. If a favorite restaurant in Ft. Lauderdale has been able to pull off tomatosalata, loukaniko, and pastitsio, then, with the help of (being seduced by) this book, I can too. I will romance this book. And, as a fun bonus, it's enthusiastically endorsed by all my favorites: Barbara Kafka, Gael Greene, Paula Wolfert, Anthony Bourdain, and Gourmet Magazine.

Kim V says

How to Roast a Lamb by Michael Psilakis is an oversize and gorgeous Greek cookbook. It is also, in part, a memoir of Psilakis's early years.

How to Roast a Lamb would be ideal for a Greek cuisine foodie or other proficient cook. For instance, foodies will likely enjoy the following recipes: Ouzo & Orange-Braised Snails; Roasted Skate with Walnut Baklava Yogurt & Candied Quince; and Octopus, Salami & Apples with Anchovy Vinaigrette and many more. The novice cook, however, may find these recipes challenging and/or aspirational. Still even the novice cook will find numerous delicious and accessible recipes, such as: Shrimp with Orzo & Tomato; Pan-Roasted Chicken with Lemon Potatoes; Spinach Rice; and Beef & Rice Meatballs in Egg-Lemon Soup. In addition, the memoir passages provide an interesting backstory to the recipes.

How to Roast a Lamb would be a great gift for Greek Foodies of all levels!

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Advance Review Copy Provided Courtesy of the Publisher.

Catherine says

Really enjoyed Psilakis' personal stories throughout the book; I particularly enjoyed his stories of his Greek dancing career, and the picture of him dancing on top of a bottle was incredible! I can't wait to try his recipes for gyro and souvlaki because they look fabulous.

Suzanne (Chick with Books) Yester says

What a gorgeous cookbook! Oversized with beautiful color photographs, it is a cookbook to enjoy not just for the recipes but for the stories of Michael Psilakis' family peppered thru-out the book. I'm not a professional cook, I just need a cookbook that is well written and this is what How to Roast a Lamb is- a well written cookbook. When I opened up the book to look at the recipes I did not feel intimidated I felt invited. Like a friend talking about his or her recipe, Michael writes a little about the recipe before the "how-to's". I made the Chicken Souvlaki Shish Kabob w/ Ladolemono sauce & spinach rice. Easy, and delicious! The house also smelled wonderful! Well organized recipes, easy to understand and delicious results... What more can you ask for?! I can now say Greek Cuisine is more than feta cheese and Baklava!

Carrie says

This is a great book. I don't know a lot about Greek cooking, but this seems really authentic. Psilakis peppers the book with personal anecdotes. I unfortunately have not had the chance to make much, but the few recipes I've made are definite keepers. Also, it seems that Psilakis uses building block methods for his cuisine. For example, the garlic confit, chickpea confit, and artichoke confit come in handy in a majority of other recipes. I also made melitzanosalata (eggplant dip) and it was beautiful and delicious. I'd like to own this book someday!

Janet says

This is as much an endearing family history as it is a cookbook. While I doubt I'll make any of the recipes, I'll make a point of visiting one of his restaurants in Manhattan, Kefi or Anthos.

Haley Mathiot says

Review: this is a beautiful (huge! like, 2 inches thick.) book bursting with incredible pictures that make me crave salad like i never have before and make octopus actually look edible (and appealing), information that I never would have known or thought about about the ingredients, and fantastic (and some... interesting...)recipes. A typical recipe will include a beautiful full page photograph, description of the food, very easy to read and easy to follow instructions, extra ideas and variations, and little notes and tips and pieces of advice.

There are eleven categories: My Father's Garden, Open Water, Dinner family style, My First Recipes, The hunting trip, a Lamb and a Goat, Psilakis Birthday Dinners, Kefi—A time to dance, Big party cooking, Anthos—the new world, and The Aegean Pantry. the back of the book includes recipes by type of dish and even metric conversions.

Each section is headed off with a two or three page story about Michael's life and lots of photographs. some of the stories are sweet, like him remembering cooking for his parents for the first time. some are things i can relate to, like the thrill and pride of learning to dance. (though I never learned to dance on an empty glass beer bottle.) and some stories are sad and sweet, like him telling the time he watched his father kill the lamb that was his friend for Easter dinner.

a quick sampling of the recipes, some that sound fantastic:

*Warm Feta with Tomato, Olive and pepper salad

*Whole Spit roasted lamb

*Grilled watermelon and grilled manouri (which sounds discussing but the photograph looks incredible)

*roasted scallops with cauliflower, tart dried cherries, and capers in brown butter sauce

*Steak with bone marrow htippiti

*Dumplings with sausage, dandelion greens, sundried tomato and pine nuts

Now I'm hungry.

Recommendation: anyone who enjoys cooking really good food, gourmet, beautiful photographs of really good food, or just loves cooking in general.

Laura Weber says

The recipes are wonderful and work well for the home cook. My favorites are the gyros and his version of hummus. The stories ring so true and are so enjoyable to read. My favorite cookbook, and I have a lot of them.

Bridget says

I love food but I hate cooking. Luckily, the love of my life also loves to cook. He's the king of spices and can cook pure perfection. He likes to take his time and make sure that the meal is as tasty as possible. There are tons of yummy recipes in this book that I am dying to try.

Caitlin says

This is a beautiful combination cookbook/memoir filled with relatively classical Greek recipes & a number of the writer's own interpretations of these classics.

Michael Psilakis was voted Best New Chef by Food & Wine magazine for 2008. One of his Greek restaurants - Anthos - is one of only two Greek restaurants in the world with a Michelin star; that's really impressive. That he writes well & tells charming story, obviously loves food & wants to share his love of it, & can craft a good recipe are wonderful bonuses where he is concerned.

Many of these recipes are, frankly, complicated & require a pretty strong cooking background & lots & lots of ingredients. Many more, however, are straightforward & should be doable for most home cooks. The author's stories about his family & his love of Greek cuisine are highly readable & enjoyable. The photos in the book are outstanding & will make you want to go out, buy, & prepare octopus. Right now.

I am especially intrigued by the last chapter of Aegean pantry items that includes all kinds of confits, vinaigrettes, & candied fruits. Aside from the fact that it all sounds really tasty, it also screams Christmas presents!

This is a beautiful book & I know I'll be cooking from it often.

Ellen Christian says

This is a beautifully done hardcover cookbook with a dust jacket. The cookbook has 288 pages and eleven chapters. The author prefaces each chapter with stories and photographs from his childhood that tie into the theme of each chapter and explain his love for cooking.

There are a total of one hundred and fifty recipes and many black and white and color photographs throughout the book. Many of the recipes feature meats some of us might not be familiar cooking with including pheasant, rabbit, venison, lamb and goat. Being a Greek cookbook, there are many seafood recipes as well. You will also find chicken and beef recipes and several vegetarian recipes. I was a bit disappointed that there were not more pastry and dessert recipes since I have a huge sweet tooth.

Each recipe lists the recipe title in Greek and English, a short paragraph with a bit of information about the recipe, a full ingredient list and of course directions. The directions are well written and very easy to follow for the novice or more experienced cook.

For those not familiar with Greek cooking, the author includes information about the ingredients. For example, he explains the various cheeses, oils and olives he uses in the recipes. He also offers suggestions for substitutions if you can't find some of the Greek foods at your supermarket.

This is a great cookbook for anyone interested in Greek cooking and it would be the perfect gift for those that enjoy reading their cookbooks cover to cover. I'm looking forward to trying the Beef Stew with Leeks and the Stewed English Peas and Mushrooms.
